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Contact: Seth Unger
(916) 445- 4950
Frank Losco - PIA
(916) 358-1802

Community Leaders, Employers Discuss Benefits of Hiring Trained Ex-Offenders

SACRAMENTO – Community leaders and employers from Sacramento gathered today to discuss the benefits of hiring trained ex-offenders at the Sacramento Regional Employers' Forum. The *Sacramento Region's Undiscovered Labor Resource* was the theme of the event where employers learned how job training provided to inmates during incarceration can greatly reduce training costs for hiring agencies. The forum was sponsored by the Prison Industry Authority, the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, and PRIDE Industries.

"The opportunity to bring employers together to discuss the benefits of hiring trained ex-offenders is an important step in establishing an employment path for inmates preparing to parole. This re-entry program is a component of Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger's commitment to increasing public safety and reducing recidivism by successfully transitioning parolees into meaningful employment," said K.W. Prunty, Undersecretary, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation. "Hiring trained ex-offenders can bring significant value for employers, parolees, and our community. Employers gain well-trained workers, parolees obtain employment and the local community benefits by creating neighborhoods with fewer unemployed ex-offenders."

Inmates have opportunities to learn a variety of skill sets while working in over 60 factories that PIA operates. In many factories, inmates can earn industry-accredited certifications that document their skill sets including welders, opticians, metal workers, and carpenters.

Employers can obtain a federal tax credit worth up to \$8,500 and a no-cost federal bond for up to \$50,000 for hiring ex-offenders. Employers seeking further information about hiring trained ex-offenders should contact Joseph Armor, PIA Administrator, Inmate Development Branch, at (916) 358-1661.

PIA is the State organization that provides productive job training assignments for inmates in California's adult correctional institutions. PIA's products and services are available to governmental entities, including federal, state, and local agencies. PIA operates factories that produce a variety of goods and services including: modular buildings, office furniture, eye glasses, license plates, coffee, shoes, printing services, signs, binders, clothing, and much more.

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